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MEDIA RELEASE

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ECSTASY DISTRIBUTORS RECEIVE LENGTHY PRISON SENTENCES

CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE: United States Attorney Tom Colantuono announced today that Efrin Garay, age 28, of Lowell, Massachusetts, and Nelson Pantoja, age 33, also of Lowell, Massachusetts, were sentenced for their involvement in the distribution of over **50,000 tablets of ecstasy** (3,4 methylene dioxymethamphetamine) to individuals in Manchester, New Hampshire. Garay was sentenced by United States District Court Judge Joseph DiClerico to a 10-year term of imprisonment, followed by a four-year period of supervised release. Pantoja was sentenced to a nine-year term of imprisonment, followed by a four-year period of supervised release.

The prosecution was the result of an investigation conducted by the New Hampshire State Police Narcotics Investigation Unit, which identified Garay and Pantoja as major ecstasy distributors to the Manchester, New Hampshire area. Both Garay and Pantoja were linked by law enforcement as ecstasy sources of supply to Andrew Frost, age 25, of Manchester, New Hampshire, who himself distributed approximately **100,000 tablets of ecstasy** in Manchester, New Hampshire, during a one-year period. The investigation also disclosed that Frost traveled to Massachusetts each week in order to meet with Garay and Pantoja and purchase between 1,000 - 2,000 tablets of ecstasy. Frost, in turn, distributed the ecstasy in and around Manchester, New Hampshire, for \$8. - \$11. for each tablet. Some of the ecstasy would then be distributed at rave parties in New Hampshire.

Frost and four other individuals, Elizabeth Tilton, age 21, Juan Costillo, age 32, Peter Ramos, age 24, and Stephanie Douglas-Ramos, age 25, all from Manchester, New Hampshire, were also indicted for their involvement in the distribution of ecstasy. All five have entered guilty pleas and are scheduled to be sentenced in United States District Court in May and June, 2003.

The prosecution was the result of a joint investigation between the New Hampshire State Police Narcotics Investigation Unit, the Manchester, NH Police Department, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Massachusetts State Police, the Lowell, Massachusetts Police Department, and the United States Attorney's Office. United States Attorney Colantuono commended the investigation

stating, “The controlled substance ecstasy has been a particularly dangerous drug for the youth of New Hampshire. It has been linked to numerous deaths throughout New England and is readily available to young adults at rave parties. The prosecution of Efrin Garay and Nelson Pantoja represents the continuing efforts of law enforcement, working jointly with the United States Attorney’s Office, to eradicate ecstasy from the streets of New Hampshire.” This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U. S. Attorney Terry Ollila.